

but I am glad he made the journey. We did not find the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, which we were so sure were there. Even JOHN EDWARDS and JOHN KERRY, Bill Clinton, and many of the leading Democrats who are so critical of this administration said 2 years ago there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

But aside from that, what we did find is nearly 400 mass graves of citizens who had disappeared from their families. We found women who had been raped, husbands and brothers who had disappeared, forced to join an Army or had their tongue cut out for saying the wrong thing. We found a very oppressed people. We have liberated those people.

I believe what we have done in Iraq, we made the right decision, and I am very proud of the soldiers that are over there and the ones who have come home have done the job.

I am proud to represent the 3rd Infantry that was so much a part of the campaign in the Euphrates River last year. I believe the worst thing we can do in Washington now, in the name of partisan politics, is to try to erode this victory in order to gain the White House.

I hope we will all come together today and support this very important resolution in support of our troops.

MARKING THE ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, as true as my friend from Georgia has just said, we are about to begin consideration of a very important resolution. It is one which I believe should, in fact, enjoy strong bipartisan support. It is non-controversial in that it is designed simply to, as the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE) said last night before the Committee on Rules, provide commendation to our troops and to the Iraqi people and to the coalition forces for the fact that a year ago this week they began this effort to bring about the liberation of the people of Iraq, and there has been tremendous success.

We often hear of the negatives, Mr. Speaker, but I think it is important, as Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has pointed out time and time again, we are seeing schools rebuilt. We are seeing all kinds of very, very positive developments, even though we deal with some serious challenges.

So, Mr. Speaker, my message as we prepare for consideration of this rule, which will be debated for an hour and then we will have 4 hours of debate which will allow for a wide range of views to come forward, I hope that at the end of the day, the United States House of Representatives will stand firmly behind our troops and this effort which we mark the anniversary of right now.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. 557, RELATING TO THE LIBERATION OF THE IRAQI PEOPLE AND THE VALIANT SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES AND COALITION FORCES

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 561 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 561

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the resolution (H. Res. 557) relating to the liberation of the Iraqi people and the valiant service of the United States Armed Forces and Coalition forces. The resolution shall be considered as read for amendment. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution and preamble to final adoption without intervening motion except: (1) four hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on International Relations or their designee; and (2) one motion to recommit which may not contain instructions.

SEC. 2. During consideration of House Resolution 557 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the resolution to a time designated by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BASS). The gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to my friend, the gentleman from Fort Lauderdale (Mr. HASTINGS) pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purposes of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, 1 year ago, our brave servicemen and -women began a military operation that brought freedom for tens of millions, toppled one of the most despicable regimes in the history of the world, and strengthened the national security for the American people.

Operation Iraqi Freedom was, and continues to be, a military success of the highest order. Within 4 weeks from the start of operations on March 19 of last year, the U.S. military had won unqualified victory. Saddam Hussein and his Baathist regime could no longer terrorize the Iraqi people who were finally free to act, do and say as they pleased for the first time in decades.

Mr. Speaker, there is no question that Saddam Hussein endangered world security. He posed a threat to his people, his region and the international community. Trusting the intentions of a man who started two wars, gassed his own people, and supported international terrorism would have been grossly irresponsible.

As weapons inspector David Kay has said, we know Saddam Hussein wanted weapons of mass destruction, we know he was attempting to resuscitate his il-

licit programs, and we know with certainty who he viewed his greatest enemy to be.

In a world where Iran can buy its way to a nuclear program with assistance from Pakistan's top nuclear scientist, combined with Saddam's access to illicit oil revenue, the fact that weapons of mass destruction have not yet been found in Iraq is hardly proof that Saddam Hussein did not want to severely hurt our country. Moreover, American national security has been solidified by the military action that was undertaken last year.

Mr. Speaker, does anyone really believe that Iran would be cooperating with international nuclear inspectors today if we had not launched this military operation? Does anyone really believe that North Korea would be engaged in six-party talks over the future of their nuclear program if the United States had not deposed Saddam Hussein? Does anyone really believe that Muammar Qaddafi, as recalcitrant in his defiance to the international community as ever a dictator has been, would have willingly come to the United States and Britain and declared that he wanted to end his illicit weapons programs had the American military not marched into Baghdad?

Mr. Speaker, Operation Iraqi Freedom sent an unmistakable signal to the rest of the world's tyrannical leaders: Either play by the rules or face the consequences.

Now, the events of September 11 taught us that we cannot allow threats to arrive on our shores before we combat them. If other Nations wish to keep their head in the sand about the dangers of proliferation and terrorism, that is their prerogative, but we cannot and could not afford to take that chance.

To those who complain of the cost of war and its aftermath, I simply will note that estimates of the cost of containing Saddam and his successors, as some have argued we should have done, are upwards of six times the dollar amount we have spent on war and reconstruction thus far, and significantly higher in terms of human lives lost.

Because of the heroic action of our military, the Iraqi threat has been mitigated efficiently and a new dawn has begun for the people of Iraq.

Earlier this month, Iraqi leaders signed the transitional administrative law into effect. It establishes an Iraqi law, a bill of fundamental human rights and paves the way for Iraqi democracy.

Perhaps more important than the signing of the law itself, was the agreement of Suni, Shiite, and Kurdish leaders to sign the document. While differences amongst them remain, and the road ahead will be difficult, it is clear they are acting with the best interests of the new Iraq and its people firmly in mind.

I should say our colleague, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE) is going to, in her remarks today, tell a